



Center for the Evangelical United Brethren Heritage

TELESCOPE - MESSENGER

United Theological Seminary, Dayton, Ohio

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50TH ANNIVERSARY OBSERVANCES EVANGELICAL UNITED BRETHREN CHURCH UNION

DAYTON, OHIO
By Edwin H. Maynard

It was a celebration—part family reunion and part camp meeting—when some 250 gathered at United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio, November 16-18, 1996, to observe the fiftieth anniversary of the forming of the Evangelical United Brethren Church.

The days were marked with renewed friendships, enthusiastic singing, prayer and worship. Of those attending, 19 proudly wore buttons proclaiming “I was there,” meaning they were at the service in Johnstown, PA, November 16, 1946, that combined the Evangelical Church and the Church of the United Brethren in Christ.

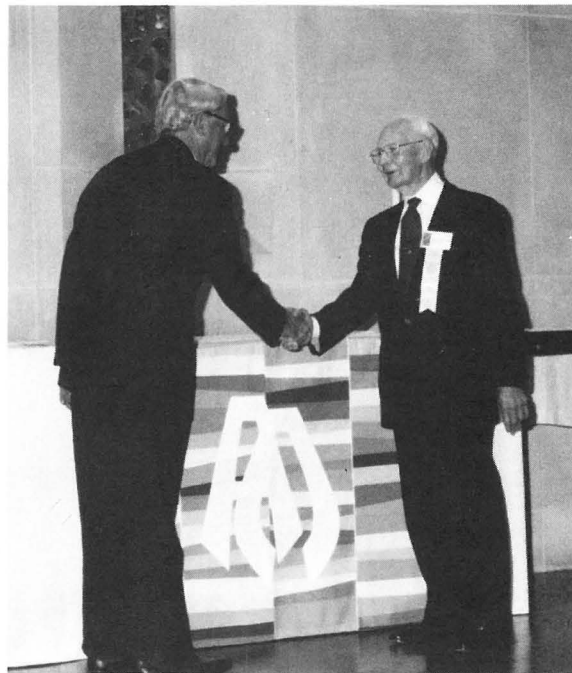
Greetings were exchanged between Dayton and a similar celebration at Johnstown. Other greetings were received from persons in the EUB tradition and from civic leaders, including President Bill Clinton.

In 1946 the union was symbolized by a handclasp between Bishop John S. Stamm, Evangelical, and Bishop Arthur R. Clippinger, United Brethren. In Dayton that handshake was re-enacted by two retired United Methodist
(continued on page 4)

JOHNSTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA
by Patricia L. Knudson

Johnstown, Pennsylvania was once again in the spotlight of the religious community when it

hosted the 50th Anniversary Celebration of the formation of the former Evangelical United Brethren Church. The theme of the four-day event on November 14-17 was “Come Home to Your Roots.” In 1946 the United Brethren in Christ held their final General Conference at the First Church in this city while the Evangelicals met in their final session at Beulah Church. The two groups then climaxed a week of historic meetings with a union service held on November 16, 1946 in First United Brethren Church



Bishops Clymer and Milhouse

with Bishops John Stamm and Arthur Clippinger presiding. After years of negotiation and talk, a simple handshake between these two men produced the tenth largest Protestant denomination in the United States. Then in 1968 this church joined with the Methodists to form the United Methodist Church that we know today.

Preparations for the recent November events began almost two years ago when a local
(continued on page 2)

committee was formed with Reverend Robert Callihan as chairman. Reverend Callihan, formerly a United Brethren, had received his call to the ministry while attending the 1946 service and went on to serve First Church (now United Methodist) as his last full-time pastorate. He currently serves Beulah as associate.

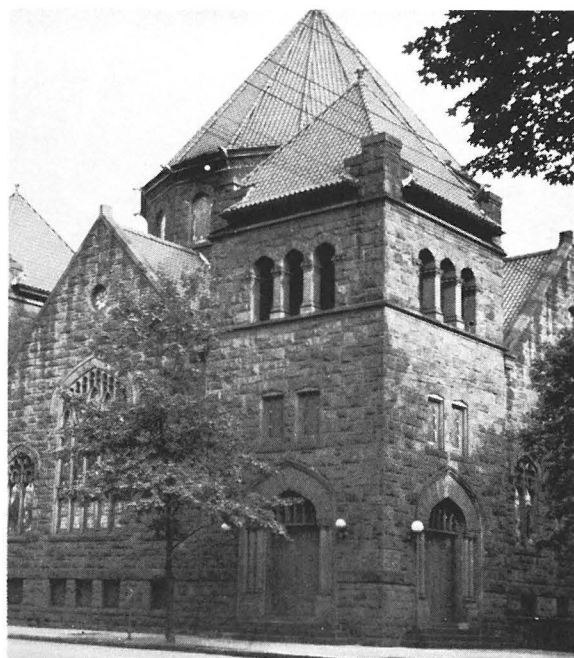
The first event of the week was an appearance by the Western Pennsylvania Ministers Male Chorus in concert at Beulah Church on Thursday night. The Chorus is comprised of approximately sixty clergy who travel throughout the

Conference to present the message of Christ through music. It had its beginnings in the Evangelical Church in 1945 under the direction of Reverend Paul Halstead, who still sings with the Chorus. An audience that filled the sanctuary was treated to a varied program including songs of praise, spirituals, and songs of the season. The Chorus is directed by Reverend William Schmeling, Superintendent of the Greensburg District and former pastor at Beulah.

Festivities continued on Friday night when a banquet was held at Beulah. Each of the crowd of 220 was presented with a delegate's ribbon exactly like those worn by the representatives in 1946. Those present heard remarks by Bishop George Bashore of the Pittsburgh area and Bishop Hermann Sticher, Retired from the German Conference. First person portrayals highlighted the evening with Reverend Don Joiner as Bishop Stamm and Reverend Dan Shearer as Bishop Clippinger. An original anniversary video, "In the Fullness of Time" was introduced. It traced the movement of immigrants into the Johnstown area with their diversity of religious beliefs and the growth of

the evangelical movement. Original film of the 1946 union service was included as were interviews with some of those who had helped organize and conduct the conference. Featured in the video were Bishop Bashore and District Superintendent, Reverend Jaime Potter-Miller speaking about the mission and future of the Church.

On Saturday morning youth groups from the Johnstown District were treated to a pizza party and concert at Beulah. "Voix" (Voices) with Rachael and Ann sang at the hour-long performance. At noon a parade left Beulah for First Church in downtown Johnstown. The



First Church, Johnstown, Pennsylvania

parade route traced that of fifty years ago when the Evangelical Conference Delegates walked to First Church to participate in the union service. The parade featured antique cars, floats, a local clown group, motorcycles, Reverend Dick Burns as a circuit rider on horseback, and a large group of both youth and adults walking the more than one-mile route. A highlight of the event was the appearance of a band of Beulah members riding tandem bicycles. Their T-shirts read, "Who's Steering Your Life," "Christians are All

Riding in Tandem."

A pre-service rally with Gospel and camp songs was led by Reverend Kenneth Rippin on Saturday afternoon at First Church. Worship began with a simulated radio broadcast of the original broadcast of the union proclamation exactly fifty years ago to the day. Incorporated in the traditional service were parts of the 1946 liturgy including the hymn, "The Church's One Foundation," and a reenactment of the historic handshake between Bishops Stamm and Clippinger. A plaque was unveiled during the service designating First Church as an historic landmark of the United Methodist Church.

Keynote messages were delivered by Bishops Bashore and Sticher. Bishop Bashore, formerly of the United Brethren in Christ, told the listeners that there is a need for a warm heart relationship with God; salvation is more than a baptism or creed. It is the beginning of a process of becoming disciples of Christ. As Christians our only comfort is in Jesus Christ and there is an urgency to proclaim Him as Savior. Bishop Sticher recalled that the United Brethren in Germany had joined with the Methodists at the turn of the century so that at the time of union the German Church belonged to the Evangelical branch. He spoke of the emergence of the Church in Germany after the paganism of World War II. Today's church needs to capture a sense of the spirit of her mothers and fathers. We need a sense of mission, a sense of direction, and a sense of responsibility, he stressed. The two bishops were renewing a long-standing friendship begun in the 1950s when a seminary choir, of which Bishop Bashore was a member, traveled to Germany for a series of concerts. Bishop Sticher had served as translator for the group.

The activities of the day ended with a banquet at Arbutus Park Manor. The Park had its beginning in 1904 as a campground and is now a retirement center serving the regional United Methodist community. Harry Blanset, a resident of Arbutus and a delegate to the 1946 Conference, served as toastmaster. Reverend Gene Seese, a native of the local area and former president of Indianapolis University was the featured speaker. He spoke of the need to throw out trash and keep treasures, to get rid of outmoded creeds, traditions, and practices and to focus on the things which keep the church in the center of God's will.

On Sunday morning, Bishop Hermann Sticher was the speaker at Beulah Church. His sermon was "God's Amazing Ways of Doing Things," using as his text the scripture in Mark about the feeding of the multitude. He spoke of four ways that God works; He cannot be controlled by man-made social or national boundaries, His basic motivation is compassion, His work must be carried out through people, and prayer ties with the Father give the Church

rich power.

First United Methodist Church hosted the final event of the Anniversary weekend with a worship service on Sunday. The theme of the afternoon was that of new beginnings through Jesus Christ. The Sacrament of Holy Communion was served using the EUB Liturgy. Bishop Sticher spoke briefly on the future of the church, and the keynote speaker was Reverend Jaime Potter-Miller. "We assume that the congregation that is doing the most is the congregation that is doing the best," she said. Do not allow minutes of busyness to crowd out the moments of highest value. The service and weekend activities concluded with the lighting of candles. A representative from each of the district churches came forward to receive light from the Christ candle. The congregation was challenged to take the light back to their own churches and work so that the light will reach a needy world and transform it.

The Evangelical United Brethren Church existed for only 22 years before giving her life to become part of the United Methodist Church. She brought a sense of mission and evangelical fervor to the new union and a strong commitment to changing lives through the Gospel. Christ's challenge to us has not changed. As we move forward toward the 21st century, we need the enthusiasm and ardor of the past to reach out to hungry people everywhere.

ABOUT THIS ISSUE

Patricia L. Knudson is historian of Beulah United Methodist Church, Johnstown, PA, site in 1946 of the final General Conference of the Evangelical Church.

Edwin H. Maynard, long-time journalist for United Methodist Communications, now is a retired resident at Otterbein-Lebanon Home and guided the publicity for the Dayton celebration.

Photos for the Dayton observance are by Robert Callender, Director of Development, and Tyron Inbody, Professor of Theology, United Theological Seminary.

Millard J. Miller, long-time member of the Advisory Board, resides at the Otterbein-Lebanon Retirement Community, Lebanon, Ohio.

Donald K. Gorrell, editor of the *Telescope-Messenger*, taught United Methodist history for over twenty years at the seminary.

bishops who began their ministries in those churches: Bishop Wayne K. Clymer, Evangelical, and Bishop Paul W. Milhouse, United Brethren.

The opening worship service was modeled on the 1946 Johnstown service, including the opening hymn, "The Church's One Foundation," and other elements of the liturgy. A sermon by the Reverend Elmer J. O'Brien, founding director of the host Center for the Evangelical United Brethren Heritage, emphasized the vibrant ecumenical spirit that was a hallmark of the tradition from its origins in early 19th century America.

At a banquet Bishop Milhouse gave appreciative and often humorous reminiscences of EUB bishops. In a Sunday sermon Bishop Clymer noted that anniversaries are observed so we will remember, but he also put in a word for forgetting: "What we choose to remember and what we choose to forget largely determines the kind of persons we become."

There was a tour of historic sites in Dayton, which included the headquarters buildings of the EUB Church and before that of the United Brethren. The last headquarters building now is occupied by the United Methodist General Council on Ministries, which provided lunch and guided tours of the facility for celebration participants.

The substance of the observance came in eight scholarly papers on aspects of the EUB heritage, planned to be published as a book. A brief summary of each appears below. Collectively they identified distinctive EUB contributions to the United Methodist Church and to the wider Christian community.

EUB qualities that emerged were: a legacy of European pietism blended with a Wesleyan awareness of God's grace; strong lay participation; democratic governance of the church; close fellowship at local, annual conference and denominational levels; and an ecumenical spirit.

The Reverend John R. Knecht, president emeritus of the host seminary, suggested reasons for the EUB emphasis on ecumenism. He noted that the antecedent denominations were born around 1800 in a revival among German-speaking Americans centered on personal salvation. Those with that experience wanted to

reach out to others who reported a similar experience, regardless of denomination. In recent times, he said, EUB members realized that, being small, "we knew that by ourselves we could not save the world." The EUB Church contributed many leaders to the National Council of Churches in the United States and to the World Council of Churches. Its mission policy favored formation of united churches in countries where it worked.

The event concluded as the Reverend James D. Nelson read a paper on

EUB piety and hymnody, illustrated by the singing of hymns, some in German. Dr. Nelson, who was general chairman of the observance, is professor of church history at United. He also is director of the Center for the Evangelical United Brethren Heritage, co-sponsor of the event with the Historical Society of the United Methodist Church.

The Historical Society held its annual meeting at the conclusion of the celebration under leadership of Ms. C. Faith Richardson, its president.



United Chapel, Dayton, Ohio

SUMMARIES OF DAYTON PRESENTATIONS

By Edwin H. Maynard

The Celebration honored the EUB heritage through scholarly papers, sermons and reminiscence. The purpose was defined by the Reverend Michael Nickerson, president of United Theological Seminary, in his welcome at the opening worship service.

"We are here," Dr. Nickerson said, "to preserve the best of our rich heritage and build toward the future."

The heritage was defined in presentations over three days. Each presentation took approximately forty minutes, and the brief summaries record some of the major points made by the speakers. (The summaries are not direct quotations except where indicated by quotation marks.)



"The Road to Johnstown"

by K. James Stein,
Professor of Church
History, Garrett-
Evangelical
Theological
Seminary

Union in
Johnstown
came after more
than a century
of fraternal

relations and occasional talks of union. The founders of the Evangelical and United Brethren denominations had moved in the same circles and talks of union occurred as early as 1813.

The modern stage was set in 1924 with conversations during a meeting of the Federal Council of Churches in Atlanta. In 1933 a committee of three bishops from each church discussed union and reported that "the Spirit of God was present."

Development of a plan of union was authorized by general conferences in 1937 and 1938 and the resulting plan was approved in 1942 and 1945, then submitted to annual conferences.

Problems had to be worked out concerning baptism, ordination, polity and the doctrine of entire sanctification. United Brethren had a Reformed, Mennonite and Anabaptist heritage, while Evangelicals were more like the Methodists. It was decided not to write a new confession of faith, but to affirm both.

The name was a delicate matter, happily resolved. Practical problems concerned structure, institutions and pensions.

Johnstown was the beginning, not the end, and the EUB Church early moved toward union with the Methodists.



"The EUB Understanding of Ministry"

by Donald K.
Gorrell, Professor
Emeritus of Church
History, United
Theological
Seminary

Prior to
1946 the two
churches had
similar views of
the nature of

the church and its mission, but there were differing practices.

Both elected bishops for four-year terms and both elected superintendents. However Evangelicals ordained deacons and elders, while United Brethren ordained elders only. After 1839 Evangelicals allowed only ordained clergy to vote in the annual conference, while United Brethren allowed the local quarterly conference to license lay preachers and those lay preachers could vote in the annual conference and serve appointments except for administering the sacraments. One party gave up the order of deacon and the other gave up local licensing of preachers.

Women had been licensed and ordained by the United Brethren since 1889, but the Evangelicals ordained only men. In 1946 the latter thought their pattern was adopted, but no clear policy was stated in the EUB Discipline,

which made no reference to gender for ordination. Consequently, each annual conference decided ordinations for itself, and some former United Brethren conferences continued to ordain women. This maintained that tradition during the EUB years and into United Methodist union.

In the 1946 union compromises could be made *quid pro quo* because of similar size and doctrine of the church. But in the 1968 union of 750,000 EUBs with 10 million Methodists, the difference in size made for less give and take. It was impossible to negotiate EUB term episcopacy with Methodist practice and the United Methodist Church continues to elect bishops for life. Also the quadrennial election of conference superintendents by EUBs yielded to bishops appointing superintendents annually. Despite these concessions, EUB clergy suffered no disadvantages in the united church and have served at every level of the denomination, including superintendency and episcopacy.



**"The 1962
EUB
Confession of
Faith"**

by James E. Will,
Professor of
Systematic
Theology, Garrett-
Evangelical
Theological
Seminary

At union in
1946 the

doctrinal statements of the two previous churches were kept as equally valid. The 1958 General Conference instructed the bishops to draft a single creedal statement for the church. Dr. Will was a consultant to the bishops during the two years they worked on the statement that was adopted by the 1962 General Conference without change.

The 1962 confession "paid its respects to Wesley, anticipating union with the Methodists." It acknowledged Wesley's position on freedom of will and paid less attention to the Mennonite and Reformed traditions.

The Anglican "39 Articles" were reduced by

Wesley to 24; the Evangelical Church's confession of faith reduced them further to 21. The first draft of the 1962 statement contained 18 articles and the final version 16.

Issues most debated during the process were justification, free will and sanctification. Many changes accepted the Wesleyan view over the Reformed. The concept of "total depravity" was removed. The final statement affirms baptism of children and asks for their nurture in the faith.

It is important to make new statements from time to time, but let the old ones stand, so we know what we have said at each point in our history.



**"EUB Women
and Missions"**

by Mary Lue
Warner, Missionary
and National Staff,
Board of Missions
of the EUB and the
United Methodist
Church

Women
have heard and
accepted the
challenge of the

Great Commission. Otterbein, Boehm and Albright were missionaries. Unnamed women of their time and the years since have been caregivers. Organized missions are quite recent.

In the Evangelical Association, the Eastern Conference formed a missionary society in 1838 and the next year the General Conference established one. A mission to Germany began in 1860, to Japan in 1876, and to China in 1900 and 1903.

Four United Brethren conferences formed missionary societies in 1838-40, designating all members of their churches as members of the society. In 1853 there was a church-wide missionary society, reaching to Oregon in that year, Canada in 1854, Sierra Leone in 1855 and Germany in 1869.

The first woman was appointed to the Evangelical Association Board of Missions in 1898 and the first woman home missionary was named in 1905. In the United Evangelical Church there was a Women's Board in 1897 and

the first women were appointed to overseas service in 1900. These were combined in 1922.

Among United Brethren the first conference women's missionary society was formed in 1869 and a church-wide Women's Missionary Association in 1876. Fields included Sierra Leone and Germany. The *Woman's Evangel* was started in 1882. By 1909 women were responsible for half of the UB mission work.

In 1946 the Women's Society of World Service was formed, related to the Board of Missions and 65 percent of women in the EUB Church were subscribers to what was now the *World Evangel*. Nearly half of missionary support came from women. EUB women continued to work in the existing fields and added Brazil, Hong Kong, Indonesia and Sarawak, as well as new dimensions in national missions in the USA.



"The Evangelical United Brethren in Europe"

by J. Steven O'Malley,
Professor of
Holiness History,
Asbury Theological
Seminary

In the 1840s
missionaries

from the Evangelical Association returned to the "fatherland," working in and around Stuttgart. Despite a law against unauthorized preaching, the work spread and in 1865 a Germany Annual Conference was organized. Work was extended into Switzerland and a Swiss conference was organized. Later there was a second conference in Germany and work extended into Poland and the Baltic states. A seminary opened in 1877.

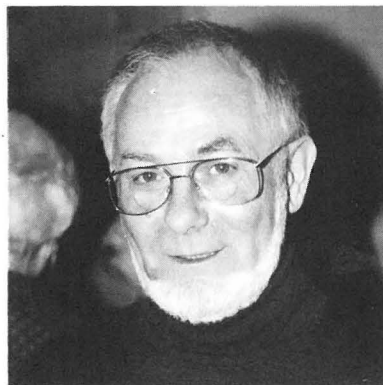
Evangelicals in Europe used class meetings and lay preachers. They were careful to call themselves an association, not a church.

The United Brethren began a mission to Germany in 1869 but it was not strong and in 1905 was merged into Methodist work.

In the present century restrictions continued to hamper work in Germany. In Bavaria

preaching was forbidden, hence one preacher "outlined in detail what he would have preached had he been allowed to preach." Government recognition came in 1920.

By 1930 European Evangelicals were paying 85 percent of their own expenses. There was immense loss of life and property during World War II, but the European church survived to become part of the EUB Church in 1946.



"From Union to Union: The Evangelische Gemeinschaft (1946-1968) in Europe"

by Michel Weyer,
Professor of Church
History and
Historical
Theology,
Theological
Seminary of the

United Methodist Church, Reutlingen, Germany

The Evangelical fraternity was stronger than nationalism, but 1946 saw daunting post-war problems: reconstruction, the division of Germany between east and west. East Germany had 69 percent of the Evangelical churches.

By 1947, with the first session of a European Central Conference, relationships with the mother church in the US returned. Numbers were reduced; in 1937 there had been a constituency of 63,000 but in 1947 it was 43,000. There was contact with the Methodist Church in Germany and an agreement to work together. Also, new relationships were established with the various state churches in Germany and other free churches.

By 1955 the Evangelicals felt conscious of having become a church and the new mentality was reflected in a new order of worship and changes in terms, such as "pastor" instead of "preacher." In 1963 a new German Book of Worship reflected the new situation as union with the Methodists drew near.



“Ecumenism and the EUB Church” by John R. Knecht, President Emeritus, United Theological Seminary and former Secretary of the EUB Board of Evangelism
The EUB commitment to ecumenism

sprung from our forebears’ conviction that the Christian faith is for all humankind and our realization that alone we cannot save the world.

The Evangelical Church and the Church of the United Brethren in Christ already had many ecumenical connections and these were continued by the new church. For the years 1946-68 Dr. Knecht has a list of more than 100 EUB persons who served in various ways with the World Council of Churches, National Council of Churches, and similar ecumenical units. In addition were many more who worked with state and local councils.

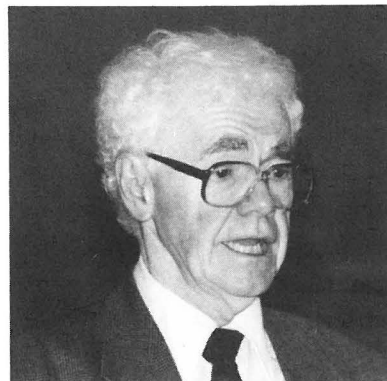
Bishop John S. Stamm had been president of the Pennsylvania Council of Churches and vice-president of the Federal Council of Churches, then 1948-50 he was last president of the Federal Council and a leader in organizing the National Council of Churches. Bishop Reuben H. Mueller was the first recording secretary of the National Council, then vice-president and president 1962-65.

On the staff of the National Council at various times were, among others, Harry Kalas, Donald Landwehr, Ralph M. Holdeman, J. Alan Ranck and Bruce Hilton.

In missions, during the 1920s and ’30s the mission boards had encouraged union churches. That policy was continued by the EUB Board of Missions, which also encouraged churches overseas to become self-governing, self-propagating, and ultimately self-supporting. The aim was a united Christian witness.

When the Consultation on Church Union (COCU) was formed in 1961, the EUB Church was one of the nine to join. Among early leaders of COCU were Paul Washburn and Arthur Core.

“We want our EUB heritage to be known, but we are part of a wider fellowship.”



“EUB Piety and Hymnody” by James D. Nelson, Professor of Church History, United Theological Seminary and Director of the Center for the EUB Heritage
Piety and hymnody

belong together because, since we are a non-confessional church the hymnal provided in fact our catechism. The hymn texts provided our theology and the role of hymnody was profound and diverse.

The early Evangelicals and United Brethren were Saxons and Anglo-Saxons—and the poorest of those. In adversity they often were “proud they had nothing.” Even when they were no longer poor, they thought they were poor. Theirs was an intense personal faith with a firm hold on the promise of victory.

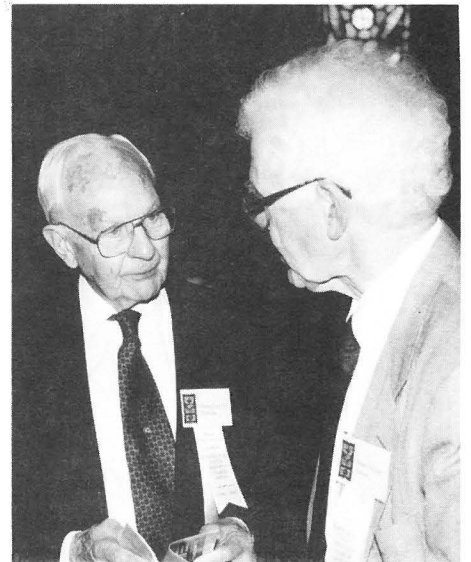
Camp meeting songs reinforced that personal faith, but our history also includes a witness in society. Otterbein College was a center for the Underground Railroad and Ben Hanby contributed to the abolition movement with his song, “Darling Nellie Gray.” Another generation took up the fight against alcohol and our EUB heritage includes many social dimensions of the Gospel.

Singing by a small choir and the congregation illustrated the EUB heritage of German chorales, camp meeting songs, folk music and Wesley hymns, among others.

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SCENES FROM THE DAYTON CELEBRATION



ANECDOTAGE

In August 1957, J. Gordon Howard was elected bishop of the EUB Church by a mail ballot to fill the vacancy created by the death of Bishop Paul Shannon.

Bishop Howard was assigned to the Western Pennsylvania Area, which included Western Pennsylvania, Erie, New York, Florida, West Virginia and Virginia, the latter being my home conference.

Gordon's father, A. T. Howard, was a missionary in Africa (1875-1905) and in Japan (1905-13). He was then elected bishop and served until 1921, when he was elected president of what was Bonebrake Seminary. Later he taught missions at the seminary and I was one of his pupils.

Gordon and I had many happy years together. I followed him as the Director of Young Peoples Work in the UB Church in 1940 and then I followed him to Westerville in 1945 where he was president of Otterbein College and I was the college pastor. He remained there for thirteen years and I remained pastor of the church for 22 years. Gordon was a good storyteller and we enjoyed many happy times together. We played some golf and tennis games together. When Gordon hit an errant golf ball, he would say, "pusillanimous." Following his use of the word, I once said, "Gordon, I believe I would rather hear you say that four-letter word beginning with D."

Gordon's best story was told me, following his first appearance as the new bishop of the Virginia Conference. The conference superintendent introduced him as the new bishop who is also a son of a bishop. A deaf old codger sitting on the front row asked the one sitting next to him, "What did he say?" He said, "He is a bishop and the son of a bishop." The deaf old man still heard incorrectly and replied, "Yes, that's what they all are."

Millard J. Miller

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